/44 cont'd/

are only rarely seen. The ho-ts'ang (or drying bin) and the granary are both built beside the house. The domesticated animals are pastured in the open fields. Corrals for cattle and pens for swine are very rarely seen.

4. Travel

The Miao live high in the mountains. From the bottom to the top of a single mountain is a long distance. Furthermore, the mountain paths are usually steep and rugged and difficult to travel on. During our field trip, we were always exhausted after visiting a Miao village, and it always took us a long time to recover. But the Miao, whether young or old, male or female, are all energetic and light as birds. They do not appear to be tired even after they have climbed several high peaks. Moreover, they all walk barefooted. Sharp stones and thorns do not bother them, and they never hurt themselves. It is usually more /45/ than a hundred li to and from a Chinese market. Starting off in the morning and returning in the evening, they never stay a day or half a day more than necessary. Only a few relatively wealthy persons ride horses.

5. Social Intercourse

The Miao are very polite in their social intercourse whether with relatives or friends. When guests leave, the host always sees them out the door. As he sees his guests off, he bends his body slightly forward with head bowed and both hands raised to the level of his head, and the guests do the same.

/138 cont'd/

Third month, fourth day. (Thursday)

164 Yüan-chiung had to get up over ten times last night because of dysentery. He cannot eat and feels so weak and depressed that it worries me. For the past two or three days my throat has been unusually parched, and today when I talk sometimes I can't make a sound. We suspect that our ailments have been caused by the impure drinking water. As the Miao live high in the mountains with
312 no streams and rivers around, all the drinking water has to be gathered from bamboo pipes in which water drop by drop is led down from the mountain tops and therefore is very dirty. We feel this is no proper place for us to stay any longer and have decided to return to Ta-ch'i immediately. But the rain has kept us from starting our
000 trip. I have spent the day in copying a number of Miao songs and legends and trying to learn the style of singing Miao songs. That the outcome of not going today was to be able to gather this unexpected material made me very happy.

527 At night the villagers gathered and contributed money and rice to have a banquet, and this was the end of the chung jen chai.

Third month, fifth day. (Friday)

000 At three o'clock in the morning I was awakened from my dreams by Yüan-chiung. He said that his dysentery was not over, and he could not hang on in this place any longer and wished to leave Ang-chi for Pao-t'ing in the morning. After some deliberation, we decided to leave here to return to Ta-ch'i first, and there we would decide whether or not to go to Pao-t'ing, depending on his condition. As our plans would be considerably affected once we left Pao-t'ing, we had to think it over rather carefully.

484 Around ten o'clock in the morning, we started to leave Ang-
[193] chi to return to Ta-ch'i, braving a heavy rain. The Miao prepared
[136] a sedan chair for Yüan-chiung, and I followed closely on foot. Because of the all-day rain mountain leeches were everywhere. How many times they climbed up my legs and filled their stomachs with my blood before I discovered them!

AKha AO4
Miao AE5

/142 cont./

M 539 832 A lover to whom favors were granted often sings of his luck in many successive sentences: "Now I have to leave your village, and whenever I remember your embraces, my soul will be happy. Now I must leave, but I shall think only of returning. My soul wanders in the clouds (meaning: you have bewitched me) and not on earth. And when I return and hold your hand, I shall not be able to stop the flow of words until the end of my life (meaning: he will take her as his wife for life). What are you going to give me then to fill my soul and to stop the flow of my words? (a clear allusion to the sexual act, the only moment when the lovers are silent). Whatever you give me I shall give back to you all my life long."

M 533 In these songs rhythm plays no role, and melody only a minor one. The words are produced in a high-pitched voice with wholly /143/ unrelated high notes. Even while traveling M [184] no rhythm is maintained and marching in our sense is unknown to these peoples. There is singing, however, on every occasion: upon setting out to hunt, in connection with the preparations for the caravan when it is necessary to look for new village sites, in connection with bringing in the harvest, and in connection with housework. Lajonquière (1) reports similarly on the Meau.

1. II, p. 311.

There are no professional singers or bards, and similarly no epics heroic songs, or war songs, which formerly, at least among the Meau, were probably present. In any case, however, they cannot be found today. On the other hand, I was able to A [533] find two melodies among the Meau and one among the Akha to which texts similar to our Alpine "ditties" are sung. Often, however, the performer only sings words which happen to come into his head.

M [171] The sound of the songs of the Meau is very reminiscent of the "joiken" of the Lapps (2), although in the case of the

2. Bernatzik, VI, pp. 78 ff.

A M 533 832 joiken there are no words. Alternate songs to which texts are

Miao AE5

/208 cont./

769 782 [852] [764] As has already been described in detail in the pertinent sections of the chapter, "Life in the Community," sacrifices are offered to the ancestors on the third day after the birth of a child, in connection with the conclusion of a marriage, and at the burial of a human being. When it is a matter of the death of the head of a family, his chief wife, together with the oldest son of the deceased, offers a sacrifice.

The Meau is not satisfied, however, with the sacrifices mentioned, for the ancestors play an important role in all the details of his everyday life. For example, the spirits are informed of any change in the number of the livestock of the household, since whenever anyone sacrifices an animal, he does not fail to let some blood drip upon sacral paper and in burning this, calls upon the ancestors to enjoy themselves as well. If [437] an animal is sold alive, one sacrifices an appropriate amount of spirit-money to the ancestors, informs them of the sale, and thanks them for their help in letting the animal become large and strong. Even if one only sells a little pig, he remembers the ancestors and thanks them for letting the sow become so great with young and bring so many young into the world.

484 782 [461] Sacrifices are made not only before decisive events, but also before beginning any kind of work or prior to a journey. I was able to take part in one such sacrifice. The brother-in-law of Chief Tsin Tsai had come for a visit and now intended to return to his village. The chief decided to sacrifice a pig in order to make sure that his relative would have a safe trip. The sacrifice was offered to the high Father-Mother spirit, and accordingly the bench that otherwise stood in front of the altar within the house was set up in front of the house. The fettered live pig was put on it in such a way /209/ that its snout projected beyond it. On the ground under it spirit-money in the value of the pig was burned, and through this it was "bought" from the spirits (Ill. 103).[1] The bench was then cleared, and on it the chief placed bowls of tea and incense candles and added six pieces of spirit-money, each having the spirit-value of 25 pieces [787] of silver. Next he picked up the oracle horns and asked the spirits whether his brother-in-law would have a safe journey home.

[1] [see cat 116, P704- ANALYST]

Miao AE5

/209 cont./

484 782 Only then was the pig sacrificed in the usual manner by having its throat cut and blood-soaked paper burned along with invocations. Then the brother-in-law confidently set out.

574 782 114 261 It is strange that the very Meau whom I knew as so moderate are described by some authors as positively gluttonous, so that one sees the Meau as using the sacrifices only as a means for arranging lavish feasts. Abadie (1), for example: "In con-

1. Page 167.

[769] trast, the veneration and cult of the dead are not as strictly observed among the Meau as among the other groups of peoples. Burials, like the other great acts of life, births or weddings, are celebrated scarcely more than as opportunities for drinking and feasting."

Lajonquière (2), too, writes in this vein, and likewise

2. II, p. 313.

Abadie (3) in almost the same words: "A vague cult is devoted to

3. Page 168.

the ancestors, but on the whole it is limited to a few invocations and some sacrifices of food, which immediately afterwards are devoured..."

These authors made their observations among the Meau in Tonkin. Abadie (4) participated in many sacrificial feasts, just

4. Page 169.

as I did, but he seems to have obtained lasting impressions of the alleged delight in Lucullan pleasures among the Meau: "The Meau [796] celebrate a great number of festivals, which for them are the opportunity for just as many gluttonous meals. At the beginning of the year, the spirits of heaven, of the earth, and of the house, as well as the ancestors, are honored in particular. At the time [776] [24] of sowing, sacrifices are offered to the mountain spirits, the

/259 cont./

166 621 [596] Among the Meau individual large /extended/ families never migrate alone, but rather the village chief selects the families who are to act as an advance division. This is usually four to five large families. Their /260/ task is to examine the new terrain, to note the cultivable land, and to make preparations for laying out fields. This advance division migrates with bag and baggage, old and young people, and all their movable [342] possessions, but at first builds no houses, living instead under wind screens and leaf-roofs. Then rice fields are laid out, and only after the first harvest does the regular housebuilding begin. -- The advance division lays out rice fields not only to meet its own needs, but tries to plan for as many reserves as possible, so that those who come later are temporarily provided for. Conversely, the members of the advance division are fully provided for up to the time of the first harvest by the inhabitants left behind in the old village.

After the first successful harvest the remaining inhabitants of the village follow and conduct themselves accordingly in the same way. Everything that is not clinched and riveted fast is taken along, and even the posts that serve as supporting piles of the houses are torn out and carried with them.

Men, women, boys, and girls drag along whatever they can [492] carry. The pack animals are loaded as heavily as possible. [614] Families that have no pack animals of their own borrow those of fellow members of the sib from other villages.

166 484 A migrating procession of the Meau is assembled according to a precise plan. First a few strong men set out and with the jungle knife hack out a path through the thickets of the primeval forest to the place of the new settlement. Once this is done, they return and fetch the others. A few armed men always form the head of the procession. The women and children, with the loaded pack animals, follow, and at the end there are again armed men. The crossbow or the cocked gun is always in readiness, the powder horn within reach.

/260 cont./

166 484 If the path forks, the head carefully puts branches over the path, by means of which those following can see the direction in which they must continue.

[201] In general, if there is no compelling reason such as war, [361] epidemics, crop failure as a result of rice diseases, and the like, a migration is never farther than a half of at most a full day's [731] march from the old village.

/261/ During the migration one always tries to reach the desired goal by the shortest route. Winding paths are taken only if there are pack animals, and then only as many as are absolutely necessary in order to prevent a breakdown of the animals. Otherwise, it goes straight uphill and then continues along the crest line; upon reaching the end, it goes straight down again, across the valley and usually through a brook, and then again climbs up the next mountain ridge. -- This kind of migra- [171] tion differs fundamentally from that of the Thai peoples, who always, as far as is in any way possible, follow the brook beds in the valleys and, when that is no longer feasible, cross the mountain by the shortest route, in order to reach the brook bed again on the other side. The manner in which the Meau travel reminds one very much of that of the Lapps and makes European [481] ideas seem positively ridiculous. They walk very fast and rest [312] often. In no time a water pipe is carved out of bamboo and makes the rounds, or a stub pipe of wood is lighted (see the chapter "Food and Stimulants"). Water is drunk from every little brook that is reached. Nevertheless they rapidly push onward.

During the migration the intimate association with the natural surrounding is clearly evident. They are constantly look- [283] ing for useful objects. Whether it be lianas whose fibers will [285] later be twisted into ropes, or those that, cut into strips, will later serve as plaiting material, in no time they are lopped off, rolled up, and fastened to the packsaddle. A squirrel is killed with a well-aimed shot of the crossbow and stowed away in the [224] pack bag; perhaps even a muntjac is bagged. The latter rarely happens, however, for, although otherwise they stalk game as soundlessly as wildcats while hunting, on a migration it is as though all the evil spirits were let loose. The shouting, hooting,

/261 cont./

166 bellowing, and cheering can be heard for miles. Consequently
484 it seldom happens that the advanced guard encounters game, for the larger animals of the forest have usually taken cover in plenty of time. During the migration, a playful or childlike
[157] impulse for destruction against the forest is also expressed, which
[824] leads the people to damage plants and trees out of sheer wantonness. For example, I never saw a Meau pass a rubber liana /262/ without cutting the plant with the chopping knife merely for the pleasure of seeing the juice ooze out.

361 For the choice of the settlement site, the altitude is of
133 fundamental significance. One can even say that the settlements of the Meau are actually limited to certain altitudes. I myself did not find any Meau village below 1,200 meters in altitude, and other authors (1), too, are struck by the settlement pattern,

1. Credner, II, p. 138.

limited to certain altitudes, of the various mountain and forest peoples in Thailand.

361 Within these altitude limits, the Meau carefully seek out a suitable slope. They never build a village on a level surface, a saddle, or on the peak of a mountain. They most prefer to choose a place which lies just below the crest line of a mountain range.

In territories in which the Meau must reckon with hostile influences, they lay out their dwelling sites so as to make access as difficult as possible. Thus, Marabail (2) writes of the Meau

2. Page 133.

of Tonkin: "They choose the steep inclines of the mountains
[417] for their dwellings... They reach these heights by means of bamboo ladders tied together, which are sometimes three hundred meters long."

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/262 cont./

M 166 484 Concerning the migrations of the Meau in Indochina, Savina (3) reports: "When the Meau move, they burn their

3. II, p. 183.

M houses; others let them fall into ruins. The small children are [482] put into carrying baskets with the chickens and suckling pigs. When everything is ready, the signal for the departure is given, and everybody begins to move without the slightest sign of sentiment or excitement. Nobody turns around in order to cast a last glance at the village. The Meau say: Our home is where the maize grows thickly."

M 361 [171] A [361] The villages of the Meau in Thailand have a very small number of houses. These are hamlets which consist of three to ten houses. This is also the size of the villages of the Yau /Yao/. The villages of the Lisu come next with four to twenty houses; the village settlements of the Akha have by far the greatest number of houses -- several hundred.

In the literature (4) there are accounts of Meau villages

4. Savina, II, p. 182.

which are said to contain from 20 to 30 houses. In Thailand I could not find any settlements that large, and Dhuraratsadorn (5),

5. Page 153.

too, who /263/ answered a questionnaire on the Meau prepared by the Siam Society, says nothing about such large Meau villages. His observations and my own correspond to Lajonquière"s (1)

1. II, p. 304.

statement: "With their attitude of independence, the Meau prefer not to have their dwellings crowded together... There are only groupings of six, seven, or eight houses around the dwelling of

/345 cont./

224 e can be wedged between the crossbar d and a foot board. After the trap has been set, the block and tackle are removed.

As an example of the behavior of the Meau hunter while stalking game in the forest, I give in the following a description from my journal: "Scouts had reported to us that a powerful lone bull elephant with mighty tusks had taken cover not far from the village. Early in the morning I set out with the chief. We climbed a steep slope and then stood at the edge of a gorge, from the bottom of which came the sound of the breaking of branches. The large mammal stood below, which made the face of the Meau light up happily. He bent forward, remained there for some time, then climbed a tree, changed his observation post several more times, and finally, from the direction of the sound, decided that the elephant was on the opposite mountain slope.

Since in order to reach him, we would have had to wind through the deep gorge in between and it was already late in the afternoon, there was no prospect of reaching the bull still that same day. The chief therefore proposed that we spend the night on the spot in order to be able to take up the chase at dawn, since he figured that he would be able to determine the location of the elephant from where we were. The Meau therefore put up a small windscreen, large enough to protect us, if necessary, against a storm. He closed off three sides of it with leaves of the fan palm, their stems thrust into the ground, in order, as he put it, to prevent the warmth from escaping. He then covered the ground with a layer of leaves about ten centimeters high, which was an excellent bed, for it was soft and kept off the dampness of the ground. At the open side of the windscreen he lighted a fire. These tasks took him about 30 minutes.

224 484 [342] [513]

"Then he began to prepare the evening meal. He searched for water, and after only a few minutes he returned with bamboo-water. In /346/ these regions one can find water stored up in the hollow spaces of certain species of bamboo, even during the dry season. To get the water, such bamboos are cut between the partitioning walls, the liquid that flows out is caught in a bamboo vessel. A thick green bamboo also provided a vessel in which the rice was then cooked. The green

[824] [272] [415] [252] [824]

/346 cont./

224 juice of the plant prevented its being burned through before
484 the meal was ready. As soon as the rice was cooked soft, the
[252] Meau slit open the bamboo and emptied the contents upon a
824 large leaf, which served him as a plate. Then he put a little
[415] of it on a small leaf, which he put aside. This was the
782 offering to the spirits. Then the meal began. The rice was
[264] formed into balls with the fingers and eaten with the hands.
574 Hospitably the chief offered me some of his meal, and he
[262] helped himself heartily when I invited him to enjoy some of
the sardines in oil that I had brought along. Whereas other
foreign peoples with whom I have dealt did not at all like
European food and in particular sardines in oil, the Meau en-
joyed everything tremendously.

[276] "When he had finally smoked his opium pipe, during which he attended to the fire from time to time, we lay down for our rest. It was somewhat disturbed at times, since, as a consequence of a head cold from which I was then suffering, I snored in my sleep, which caused the Meau to wake me up often. Moreover, I was heavier than he was, and consequently a deeper depression was made on my side, so that in his sleep he repeatedly rolled down on me, and I had no choice on my part but to wake him up often, which he did not seem to mind. We used these involuntary interludes of wakefulness to listen for the elephant, and we could hear his crackling until shortly before daybreak.

"With the first morning light, the Meau was up and dis-
[262] appeared into the forest for 20 minutes and then returned with all kinds of leaves which, as vegetables, he mixed into the rice. Some of them tasted like sorrel, others like mint; in short, many resembled our seasoning herbs. Next he brought small, pepper-like fruits of a palm tree, the small,
[263] brown, salty-tasting fruits of a forest tree, and two fruits of the wild lemon tree. He crushed these condiments and put them, like the various kinds of leaves, /Ills. 63-66 ap-
[264] pear here on unnumbered pages/ /347/ into the rice. He cooked an ample portion, enough rice for the midday meal

[Text continues on p. 473]

/347 cont./

224 as well, which was to consist of the cold remains of breakfast.
484 At the end of this morning meal, too, the opium pipe could not be dispensed with. Then the provisions were carefully
[264] wrapped in green leaves. At every handling of the food, the
[276] Meau saw to it that not one rice kernel was lost. All his movements were uncannily quick and executed methodically, and in scarcely forty minutes from the time we got up we were ready to set out.

224 "We now had the strenuous task of climbing down the steep slope and soon came across the elephant's tracks, which the Meau, bent far forward like a sleuth-hound, followed. In places we crossed rocky terrain, and the tracks of the pachyderm were then no longer visible to my European hunter's eyes. This was not the case for the Meau, who lay down flat on the ground and, from barely discernible signs, such as a small overturned stone a bent blade of grass, recognized the trail, even though it had sometimes been crossed by muntjac or deer.

"All of a sudden, in the densest of forest thickets, we stumbled upon the haunt of an old gaur bull, which, as the tracks showed, did not leave his hiding place of about one hundred square meters. Straining all his senses, the Meau crept forward soundlessly and in a whisper bade me to watch out, since in this area we might easily be attacked by the buffalo at very close range. After considerable effort we reached the bottom of the valley, crossed the brook flowing in a torrent here, and began the ascent. Laboriously and step by step we had to fight our way straight up through the densest underbrush of thorns and ilex. In a short time I was bathed in sweat and, with pulses pounding, had to rest, especially since I was hampered by my long gun. The Meau, however, was impatient and pushed on relentlessly. When he saw that I had reached the end of my strength, he offered to take my gun and my rucksack and thus laden nevertheless struck out at such a pace that I had to put on the brake again and again.

39: Bernatzik--477 E-5 (1936-1937) 1947 AO1 Thailand
Miao AE5
Akha A04

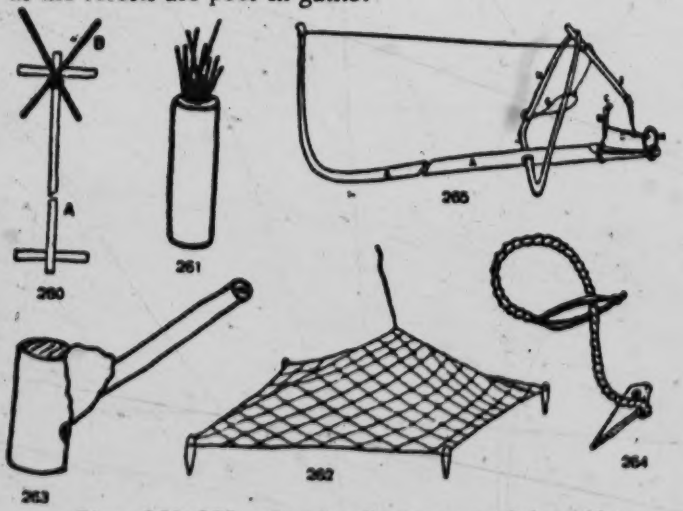
/351 cont./

c) Fishing

M 226 [484] [185]

The Meau, as passionate and successful as fishermen as they are as hunters, make long fishing expeditions and travel for days in order to reach water that is rich in fish. Since, however, corresponding to their attitude in hunting, they kill the spawn only a centimeter long as well as the largest, ravenous fish, observe no closed season, and do not provide for breeding, it is easy to understand that the brooks and rivers in the vicinity of their villages are as empty of fish as the forests are poor in game.

A 223 224



Figs. 260-265. Snaring Equipment of the Akha.

Figs. 260-261. Lime twigs: Fig. 260, twigs set up, 1/60 nat size; Fig. 261, supply quiver with lime sticks, 1/10 nat. size. Fig. 262. Fixed net for catching birds, 1/37 nat. size. Fig. 263. Decoy whistle for birds, 1/8 nat. size. Fig. 264. Snaring noose for large mammals, 1/10 nat. size. Fig. 265. Bird trap of bamboo, 1/12 nat. size.

/394 cont./

702 868 Military drills do not take place, for every Meau learns as a child how to handle weapons, which also help to secure food, and the technique of warfare is relatively simple in the primeval forest and the difficult mountainous terrain of the region inhabited by the Meau. On the other hand, in case of 701 war, there follows a precise division of the army into districts, which are obliged to furnish riflemen, spear-bearers, and cross-bow archers, but no cavalry.

[634] As soon as war threatens, every great chief (tsŭn kŏan) (see the chapter, "Political Organization") appoints a supreme commander-in-chief (tă lĕn tĕŭ), under whom stand the superior leaders (ŏu lĕn tĕŭ), to whom in turn is assigned a number of subordinate leaders (lĕn tĕŭ). Each subordinate leader commands three officers (tsŏu fŭ), each of whom is in command of 60 to 100 men. All of the supreme commanders-in-chief for their part are under the king as the supreme war-lord.

726 [202] Upon the order of the king, the army is called up by the tă lĕn tĕŭ, /395/ who send out messengers. Some Meau tribes seem to have also used signal drums (1). The rallying of the

1. Album Gotha, No. 81.

army followed within a few days or hours. As soon as the [714] messenger has arrived, the warriors take up their weapons and adorn themselves with the white turban as the emblem of war. [251] [484] In the meantime, the women pack some dry food for them which will serve as traveling provisions for several days, and the warriors immediately hasten as quickly as possible to the places designated as assembly points by the tă lĕn tĕŭ. If the messengers did not mention any points of assembly, the men gather in the village of the respective superior leader (ŏu lĕn tĕŭ).

[721] Every war is preceded by a formal declaration of war, to which the opponent replies in the same fashion. Among the Meau, the tă lĕn tĕŭ draw up the war plan. I could learn nothing about any special protection of the army while it is on the march. The army marches forward in small divisions in a broad front. This marching arrangement is in any case the

/VIII cont./

286 Ill. 88. Weaving the spun material made from hemp. Portable horizontal loom with treadle device. The warp is stretched with the help of a belt around the loins. The woman at the loom is just about to strike home the sword (cf. Ill. 89).

Ill. 89. The weaver is making preparations for the woof. The shuttle is carved out of wood. The inserted bobbin, around which the hemp thread is wound, is made of bamboo. The stick that separates the two layers of thread is made out of the same material.

283 Ill. 90. Spinning machine. With its help, four threads, which the woman doing the spinning holds in her left hand, are twisted together. By means of the little stick in her right hand, she prevents the threads from becoming tangled. She turns the flywheel with both feet.

Ills. 91-96. The harvest.

262 [244] Ill. 91. The ripe squash at the edge of the fields of mountain rice are gathered. The juicy, tart meat of the raw fruit is especially tasty in the great heat.

243 Ill. 92. The stalks of the mountain rice are cut individually, with the help of the small crescent-shaped harvesting knife, about 30 centimeters below the ear and then bundled. The straw is left standing in the fields and rots.

Ill. 93. Bringing in the harvest. Each member of the family loads himself with as many bundles of ears in carriers and baskets as he can carry. Then there is a walk for hours over the narrow mountain paths to the village. [484] The men carry in their hands the crossbows with arrows in place ready to shoot.

/IX/

252 256 Ill. 94. Peculiar mills of the Meau. The lower-millstone half is fixed, the upper part is eccentrically attached to a horizontal pole. When the latter is swing back and forth, the movable-millstone half turns. A hole is chiseled in the top of it, through which the grain is poured in. According to whether the wooden axle which connects